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Message Text

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ORIGIN ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-14
CIAE-00 DODE-00 EA-12 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03
NASA-02 NEA-10 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-02
DOE-15 CEQ-01 OES-07 SS-15 USIA-15 NRC-07 /180 R

DRAFTED BY ACDA/PA:JMPOPE:CF
APPROVED BY ACDA/PA:TAHALSTED
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P 242115Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 076942

USSALTTWO/CTB

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: MARCH 24 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. RICHARD BURT OF NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED THAT MAJOR DEBATE HAS BROKEN OUT OVER MILITARY PRIORITIES OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION. BURT SAID DEFENSE ANALYSTS IN AND OUT OF GOVERNMENT QUESTION WHETHER NEW EMPHASIS ON STRENGTHENING WESTERN DEFENSES IN EUROPE WILL BE AT EXPENSE OF CAPACITY TO RESPOND TO CHALLENGES IN OTHER PARTS OF GLOBE. TIMES WRITER SAID EMERGING AMERICAN STRATEGY HAS NOT ABANDONED
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"ONE-AND-A-HALF WAR" CONCEPT DEVELOPED UNDER NIXON, CALLING FOR FORCES ABLE TO WAGE BOTH MAJOR WAR IN EUROPE AND SMALLER REGIONAL CONFLICT ELSEWHERE. "BUT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS MODIFIED THIS CONCEPT TO IMPROVE COMBAT CAPACITY OF NATO, WHILE REDEFINING NEEDS FOR CONTINGENCIES IN ASIA, AFRICA OR MIDDLE EAST," BURT SAID. HE REPORTED THAT DEFENSE SECRETARY BROWN IS CREATING SPECIALIZED, RAPID-

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REACTION STRIKE FORCE OF 100,000 FOR USE OUTSIDE OF EUROPE, CONSISTING OF TWO ARMY AIRBORNE UNITS AND ONE MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE. BRZEZINSKI FAVORS SUCH FLEXIBLE FORCE, SAYING THAT AT TIME OF NUCLEAR STANDOFF, THERE IS GREATER

LIKELIHOOD OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN SUCH AREAS AS PERSIAN GULF, BURT REPORTED. HE SAID "RAPID-REACTION CONCEPT IS COMING UNDER FIRE FROM VARIOUS SOURCES. STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SUGGEST THAT IT COULD LEAD TO ANOTHER VIETNAM DISASTER; NAVAL OFFICERS CONTEND THAT IT IGNORES ROLE NAVY COULD PLAY IN SUCH REGIONAL CONFLICTS.... JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF ARE ALSO SAID TO QUESTION CONCEPT ON GROUND THAT PROPOSED FORCE MIGHT NOT BE ADEQUATE TO HANDLE SOVIET THRUST. JOINT CHIEFS RECOMMEND LARGER CONTINGENCY PLAN, CALLING FOR SEVEN ARMY DIVISIONS, AIRCRAFT CARRIERS AND B-52 BOMBERS TO BE SENT TO PERSIAN GULF IN CRISIS."

2. UPI REPORTED THAT U.S. SCIENTISTS DETONATED NUCLEAR WEAPON 2,100 FEET UNDERGROUND THURSDAY AT YUCCA FLATS, NEVADA. NUCLEAR TEST, CODE-NAMED "ICEBERG," WAS SECOND ANNOUNCED TEST THIS CALENDAR YEAR, UPI NOTED. FIRST WAS FEB. 23. UPI QUOTED DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY SPOKESMAN AS SAYING "WE GOT GOOD, STRONG JOLT HERE. WE KNOW THEY FELT IT IN LAS VEGAS." LAS VEGAS IS 90 MILES AWAY.

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3. NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED THAT PRIME MINISTER DESAI TOLD PARLIAMENT THAT INDIA WAS CONSIDERING ALTERNATIVES TO DEPENDENCE ON U.S. FOR ENRICHED URANIUM TO FUEL NUCLEAR POWER STATION AT TARAPUR, NEAR BOMBAY. DESAI DECLINED TO DISCLOSE ALTERNATIVES TO SUPPLIES FROM U.S. THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING "ONE PROPOSAL, ACCORDING TO RELIABLE REPORTS, IS TO REPROCESS SPENT FUEL THAT HAS BEEN ACCUMULATING IN STORAGE TANKS AT TARAPUR," TIMES SAID.

4. GEORGE WILSON OF WASHINGTON POST SAID RATHER THAN ALLOW WEIZMAN AND BEGIN TO RETURN HOME EMPTY HANDED, CARTER ADMINISTRATION "PUSHED ASIDE EARLIER OBJECTIONS BY TECHNICAL EXPERTS AND AGREED TO SELL ISRAEL NIGHT-FIGHTING SYSTEM CALLED FLIR (FORWARD LOOKING INFRARED), WHICH ENABLES SOLDIERS TO SEE AND SHOOT IN DARK. WILSON SAID ISRAEL "HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY EAGER" TO OBTAIN THIS TECHNOLOGY, BUT SOME PENTAGON SPECIALISTS CONSIDER IT SO ADVANCED AND SO SECRET THAT THEY DID NOT WANT TO RISK IT TO POTENTIAL ENEMY LIKE SOVIET UNION. WILSON QUOTED SOURCES AS SAYING THAT PENTAGON EXPERTS WERE EITHER OVERRULED OR CHANGED THEIR STANCE AGAINST LETTING FLIR GO

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ABROAD. "ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS PROMISED TO SEND FLIR, MUCH OF IT STILL UNDER DEVELOPMENT BY U.S. MILITARY, TO ISRAEL ONCE IT WAS READY FOR DELIVERY IN QUANTITY TO U.S. GROUND FORCES -- PROBABLY IN 1980 OR 1981.... BESIDES FLIR, CARTER ADMINISTRATION THIS TIME MADE NO OTHER MAJOR ARMS COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL OTHER THAN AGREEING TO LET

ISRAEL BUY BETWEEN 30 AND 40 HUGHES LIGHT OBSERVATION HELICOPTERS INSTEAD OF GOING THROUGH WITH PURCHASE OF 18 BELL COBRA HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS." VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SALT (ARMS CONTROL), PRESS SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE076942
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JMPOPE:CF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780326/aaaaawdb.tel
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Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: 25bbadbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ACDA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3207507
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MARCH 24 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL INTEREST LONDON FOR AMB/EX
TAGS: PARM, SOPN
To: GENEVA USSALTTWO
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/25bbadbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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